



WESTPORT CONNECTICUT
 PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT
 LONGSHORE CLUB PARK
 260 SOUTH COMPO ROAD, WESTPORT, CT 06880

Levitt Pavilion Sub-Committee of the Parks and Recreation Commission
Final Minutes
April 29, 2021

The Levitt Pavilion Sub-Committee of the Parks and Recreation Commission held a meeting on Thursday, April 29, 2021 @7:32pm. Pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order No. 7B, there was no physical location for this meeting. It was held electronically and recorded via Zoom.

Members Present:

Charles Haberstroh, Chairman; Alec Stevens, Stephen Axthelm

Also Present:

Andy Fleischman, Friends of the Levitt Board Member; Carleigh Welsh, Levitt Pavilion - Director of Marketing & Development, along with members of the public.

1. Approval of Minutes

Upon a motion by Charles Haberstroh, seconded by Alec Stevens, the minutes of the November 9, 2021 Levitt Pavilion Sub Committee were approved with corrections 2-0 (one absent).

2. Public Comments:

Sal Liccione, RTM Member #9, 50 Church Lane requested that the Levitt Pavilion Sub-Committee members meet with everyone in the downtown community to review the sound protocols for the Levitt Pavilion. He also wanted an update on the paving of the parking lot at the Levitt and would the public be notified? Charles Haberstroh said the parking lot is scheduled to be paved the 2nd week of May and the Levitt does not have any events planned until the beginning of June. It is up the Levitt to notify the public, however it is a good recommendation.

Morley Boyd, 6 Violet Lane asked if the committee thinks the Town is approaching a point where they think there is too much music being played by different venues throughout Town. Also, does this lessen the Levitt Pavilion brand?

3. To take such action as the meeting may determine regarding the 2021 Sound Protocols by the Levitt Pavilion.

Charles Haberstroh asked Carleigh Welsh to review the 2021 sound protocols.

Carleigh Welsh, Levitt Pavilion - Director of Marketing & Development began with an overview of the sound protocols for the 2021 season.

- Jaffee Holden will be coming back to inspect the speaker stack optimization.
 - This will include a sound test, where sound is played at a significant higher level to evaluate them in certain neighborhoods, as well as perimeters of the location. It will be calibrated from there in order to mitigate sound bleed.

- The Levitt will follow their lead on the recommendations they make following this test and analysis.
- Throughout the season, this equipment and sound levels will be monitored.
- Engage with ongoing evaluations.
- Professional consultation with acoustic specialists.
- Manage levels.
- Community engagement.
- Self-imposed run times for many of the programs.
- Deployed “Boots on the Ground” with both decibel readers and community members.
- Pre-performance management.
- Live performance management.
- Sound committee.
- Sound Hot-Line.
- State of the Art Speaker Stack which is regularly reviewed to insure “best in class” sonic quality for a non-profit organization. This may include the reconfiguring of speakers and changing the directional flow of sound.
- When contracting artists, the Levitt issues “house rules”, which include the Levitt’s ability to override the sound happening on stage.
- Will not program back-to-back same genres. Will try to vary artists.
- The majority of the presentations are free, but this year they will require securing a ticket. They will have an approximate run time of 90 minutes for the majority of the shows.
- The children’s shows which normally run on every Wednesday have an approximate running time of 45/60 minutes.
- “Boots on the Ground” is an all-volunteer team. It is comprised of Board members of the Levitt Pavilion, the Sound Committee, summer associates, Westport residents and Town officials. They help in “real” time the monitoring of sound during live performances using Osha approved decibel readers. This year they will be doing more with the data and documentation taken during the readings in these neighborhoods.

Commissioner Comments:

There was an open dialog with the Commissioners and Carleigh Welsh regarding her recap. Alec Stevens, Steve Axthelm both stated they would like to be included in the Jaffe Holden evaluation when it takes place.

Public Comments:

Sal Liccione, RTM Member #9, 50 Church Lane requested to be part of the Jaffe Holden evaluation. Carleigh Welsh said she would take it under consideration.

Kristin Schneeman, RTM Member #9, 276 Main Street asked if the modeling study would be publicly available once its complete. She also asked, what standards are the Sound Sweepers enforcing, i.e., what is too loud? She would like clear standards of what is too loud. Carleigh Welsh responded by describing the intricacies involved in the Jaffe Holden “Sound Modeling Study” versus measuring sound in the neighborhood. Both of which are performed. In addition, Carleigh stated that volunteers will go to various locations to test sound levels to see if any adjustments need to be made in “real time”.

Andy Fleischman, Friends of the Levitt Board Member also described how sound travels from the Levitt and the different decibel levels created and how it is monitored and corrected at the sound board. Also, Carleigh Welsh reiterated the fact that volunteers are in the neighborhoods to listen and gauge sound levels as well.

Lawrence Tirreno, 137 Riverside Avenue says that he and his neighbors have had to put up with the sound spillage from the Levitt for over 30 years. He feels that the “new” Levitt Pavilion does not mitigate the sound any better and would like to know if Jaffee Holden will be making any adjustments. He requested that performances end by 9:30pm and to reduce the number of performances in the calendar year.

Morley Boyd, 6 Violet Lane stated that he believes the Levitt Pavilion does not comply with the Town of Westport’s Nuisance regulations and is in violation. He also wants to confirm if a Modeling Study will be done to create a geographic map of the downtown area or is it being skipped over? Charles Haberstroh stated that nothing is being skipped over. There have been technology gains the last time Jaffee Holden was here and they want to monitor it throughout the summer. In the fall there will be a review and at that time recommendations can be made to the Town.

Bruce McGuirk, 37 Evergreen Avenue asked what is the decibel limit that is allowed offsite of the Levitt? Carleigh Welsh said they have a Best Practices limit, as well as sending out volunteers to monitor decibel levels in neighborhoods and report back sound levels.

Andy Fleischman, Friends of the Levitt Board Member stated they do have standard limits and they are 90 to 92 at the sound board, noting that at the back of the Levitt the sound is lower.

Morley Boyd, 6 Violet Lane stated that in Westport Zoning Regulations, section 32.7.1. it states that sound being created on your property cannot leave your property. He believes that the Levitt Pavilion is in violation of that regulation.

Commissioner Comments:

Stephen Axthelm stated that this has been a robust discussion and actions are being taken that will provide this committee with additional data. He is also looking forward to taking part in the Jaffee Holden modeling sound study.

Alec Stevens said he is looking forward to hearing the results from the modeling study. He doesn’t understand the zoning regulations that Morley Boyd brought up, as everyone creates noise that leaves their property, i.e., lawn mowers.

Charles Haberstroh stated he will be reaching out to the Town Attorney regarding the nuisance noise regulations and where or how it applies to the Levitt Pavilion. He also stated that the other venues in town playing music outdoors where it is safe due to the pandemic is becoming an issue. However, as the pandemic lessens, he feels these venues will move back indoors where they originated.

4. To take such action as the meeting may determine regarding the 2021 Levitt Pavilion Schedule

Charles Haberstroh prefaced this discussion by saying that Governor Lamont will be withdrawing additional restrictions this Saturday (May 1st). He also stated that the Levitt Pavilion, the Town along with Parks and Recreation have been working hard to adjust to the guidelines given by the State for the last 12 months.

Carleigh Welsh stated that the 2021 opening season will look and feel different as they open as safely, sustainability and as vibrantly as possible. This year the announcements will be staccato and on a rolling basis. She also said that out of an abundance of caution and along with Best Practices, the Levitt will continue with reduced capacity, social distancing, masks, and assigned pods on the lawn. Also, events will be ticketed. They have received great feedback from stakeholders and others and feel this will help to reopen the Levitt sustainability.

Commissioner Comments:

Steven Axthelm asked Carleigh Welsh if she is in communication with the Remarkable Theater and the Chamber of Commerce regarding their concert schedules. Carleigh Welsh said yes, they are all in sync.

Public Comments:

Sal Liccione, RTM Member #9, 50 Church Lane wanted to be reassured that the fees have been lowered for Staples H.S. Charles Haberstroh stated that they are still in negotiations and it is inappropriate to discuss this during tonight's meeting until there is an announcement by Staples.

Martha Constable, 37 Evergreen Avenue wanted to make sure the Commissioners knew that the Downtown Merchants Association has already scheduled 40 concerts on Church Lane on Friday and Saturday nights starting in June.

Bruce McGuirk, 37 Evergreen Avenue wanted to know if the Levitt Pavilion was planning on keeping Monday night's as "dark nights"? Carleigh Welsh said she would hesitate to confirm, as it would be premature at this time.

Commissioner Comments:

Steve Axthelm said he is confident that everyone is doing the right thing and working together we can find solutions.

Upon a motion by Stephen Axthelm, seconded by Alec Stevens, the meeting adjourned at 9:45pm.

Respectfully,

Debbie Detmer, Recording Secretary